

## REFLEXIVE VERBS AND VOICE MORPHOLOGY IN ARMENIAN

---

Karine Megerdooian

In Armenian, as in many languages, the same verbal morpheme is used to mark the reflexive, passive and anticausative forms, as exemplified in (1). In this presentation, I will investigate the syntactic and semantic properties of the passive-reflexive morpheme *-v* in Eastern Armenian and argue that voice morphology does not correlate with a single meaning and does not bring about any alternations to the argument structure as previously suggested. I propose instead that voice morphology in Armenian represents a specific syntactic configuration and is overtly realized when the external argument is not projected in the syntax.

- (1) a. Ara-n amen or sap<sup>h</sup>r-v-um e [reflexive]  
Ara-Nom every day shave-REFL-Imp be.3sg  
'Ara shaves every day.'
- b. zork<sup>h</sup>-ə haxt<sup>h</sup>-v-ets<sup>h</sup> tšnam-uts<sup>h</sup> [passive]  
army-Nom defeat-REFL-Aor.3sg enemy-Abl  
'The army was defeated by the enemy.'
- c. bažak-əs kotī-v-ets<sup>h</sup> [anticausative]  
glass-Poss.1sg break-REFL-Aor.3sg  
'My glass broke.'

In this talk, I study the properties of the three verbal forms in (1) by considering the relation of the verb to its transitive counterpart, the availability of a causer interpretation in resultative forms, the possibility of using a *by*-phrase or agent-oriented adverb, the affectedness of the internal argument, and verb phrase aspect. The results show that, despite distinct semantics, all three constructions share a specific structural configuration related to a reduction in valency. Adopting a constructionist approach to verb formation, I argue that the passive-reflexive affix in Armenian represents a certain syntactic environment. In particular, I propose that voice morphology is realized post-syntactically when the specifier of *v*P is not projected in the configuration. The talk also provides an explanation for the lack of the passive-reflexive affix in the inchoative form in (2) which directly contrasts with (1c). The evidence shows that 'break' verbs, but not 'dry' verbs, are underlyingly causative and the intransitive variant is derived by a process of decausativization thus giving rise to the overt *-v* morpheme.

- (2) šor-er-ə č<sup>h</sup>or-a-ts<sup>h</sup>-an  
dress-pl-Nom dry-Inch-Aor-3pl  
'The clothes dried.'

The presentation explains the distribution of the passive-reflexive morpheme in Armenian and contrasts the results with previous works on voice morphology in other languages. The data clearly show that the presence of *-v* reflects the properties of the syntactic configuration: Voice morphology is overtly realized when the external argument is not able to project in the syntax. The proposed analysis provides a uniform treatment of the passive-reflexive morpheme in Armenian verb forms and has important consequences for a theory of the lexicon and towards an understanding of the morphology-syntax interface.